

NORUG

NEW ORLEANS ATARI USERS' GROUP

The NORUG News "Official Newsletter of the New Orleans Atari Users' Group" Vol. 4 #8 Sept. 1987

Return of the 8-bitters?

Compiled by Todd Petit

Atari Users' Groups Newsletter Network - Atari "Flying High" was the slogan being spouted at the June CES, and it is not only the battle song of the ST owner, but the XL/XE owner as well. The recent splash of 8-bit related products announced by Atari and some third party vendors is reviving the "We are not dead!" cry of long-time XL/XE owners. A new operating system, Atari disk drive, 80-column card, XE game machine, and some new software titles are the start of what many hope will be a second life for Atari's first computer system.

Synergy Concepts has announced The Expander, a new operating system on ROM for XL/XE computers. Especially useful for extended memory 8-bits, The Expander will handle upgrades of up to 512K. With 35 user controllable features, and at only \$49, The Expander is something every Atari owner should seriously consider. The Expander is menu-driven with a built-in Mini-DOS and full RAMdisk support. Not only does it allow for the configuration and control of multiple RAMdisks, but it also allows you to boot from a RAMdisk. Switching BASIC in and out also comes completely under your control. For more information contact Synergy Concepts, 1404 Brewerton Drive #354, Sacramento, California 95833.

The XF551 disk drive, which should be shipping as you read this, will fill the double density void Atari left open with its 1050 drive. The XE-gray, double-sided, double density, 5 1/4 inch drive is about 3/4 the size of the old 1050 and, reportedly, 2.9 times faster. Completely compatible with existing drive protocols, the XF551 will reportedly offer somewhere in the neighborhood of 300K of storage on a single floppy. The XF551 is currently being offered through mail order for \$179.95. The 1050 drive will no longer be manufactured.

DOS, authors of DOS 2 and DOS 2.5, are providing the new disk operating system that will be packaged with the XF551. ADOS will include a "tree structure" that allows for sub-directories, as well as the choice between being a command driven or menued DOS. Problems in development of this DOS are currently being blamed for the late arrival of

the XF551 on store shelves.

Atari's 80-column card, the XEP80, is finally in mass production and should also be shipping now. AtariWriter 80 was released simultaneously. The SX212 1200 baud Modem was shown at the June Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago along with the XEP80 and was supposed to start shipping September 1. Parts availability was blamed for the delays of both of these long-promised products.

One of the products that holds the most promise for Atari 8-bit owners is something they probably won't even purchase--the XE Game Machine, Jack Tramiel's answer to Nintendo and Sega's current offerings. Essentially a repackaged 65XE, the game machine will accept cartridge software that will also work on the XL/XE line. Fourteen titles have been announced in Atari's first offering, including a 128K version of Flight Simulator II. (Atari claims cartridges of up to 256K are possible, proudly pointing out that NONE of the other game machines can match that figure.) Among the titles announced were cartridge versions of Ballblazer, BattleZone, Lode Runner, Hardball, Fight Night, Archon, Blue Max, Food Fight, Star Raiders II, and Blast 'Em. The Light Gun game controller packaged with the XE Game Machine will be made available to computer owners at a later date.

Third party software vendors have announced BoulderDash Construction Set, Spy vs. Spy III, Arctic Antics (all from Epyx), Newsroom and Certificate Maker (from Springboard), Video Title Shop, Alternate Reality--The Dungeon (from Datasoft), Gauntlet (based on the arcade hit), and a hard disk backup program from ICD.

In the rumor mill is the story about an interface currently under development by a third-party manufacturer that would allow 8-bit machines to use the single-sided 3 1/2 inch drives from the ST line..

Heading into Christmas 1987 XL/XE owners are looking at a stronger market than they have in almost 3 years. Enjoy! ■

NORUG BBS: 738-3600



The NOAUG News Bulletin Board

The New Orleans Atari Users' Group is a not-for-profit organization and is not affiliated with the Atari Corporation, or any other commercial organization.

For more information about the NOAUG you should contact one of our club officers.

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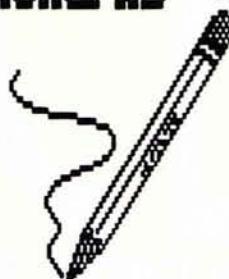
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First preference for newsletter articles is as AtariWriter Plus files. They may be presented to the editor at club meetings. If you wish to submit by modem please call first. Printed articles are also acceptable. Articles can also be uploaded to the BBS--please leave E-mail to the editor with the article name.

Special thanks to Sandra Petit & Laura Ferguson for their assistance in the preparation of this issue.

Remarks

A Column of opinion by the Editor of the NOAUG News



The new NOAUG News format and a few words of praise

By Todd Petit

N.O.A.U.G. - You've probably noticed the changes I have instituted in the format of the NOAUG News since taking office. My objective was to make our newsletter more visually exciting, more informative, and a little different from all the rest. I also wanted to produce it, as much as possible, using only my 8-bit equipment. My 320XE is no ST--but it's no slouch either!

In order to meet the goals stated above I needed something that didn't exist--specialized "desktop publishing" type software. Typesetter just wouldn't do it. I needed something that would allow for the type of graphic control Typesetter gives, but was friendlier to text input and the importing of graphics from such things as Print Shop or Micro Illustrator. When you need software that doesn't exist you only have two choices: 1) Wait for someone else to write it, or 2) Write it yourself.

I chose option 2 because I couldn't wait. This newsletter has a deadline that I am obligated to meet. Necessity being the mother of invention--I invented. The result is a collection of Action! programs I call Concepts. Concepts allows me to type articles up in AtariWriter and then format that text into the columnar format you see on this page--in a graphic format that gives me total control over every dot in every letter that makes up that text. It allows me to make titles with various sizes and styles of text. It allows me to easily import icons and other types of graphics. It gives me an overview of the entire 64K mapped page that Typesetter cannot and, last but not least, it makes nice printouts.

Why the story when I was going to explain the new NOAUG News format? Because the actions necessary to create the newsletter are as least as important as the final result. These are the kinds of situations that are going to create software for the Atari 8-bits in the future. Needs. Necessities. Ask Mike Thomas, a recent NOAUG guest speaker, why he is writing his own BBS program. To fill a need. His needs that aren't being met by commercial programs.

Finally, explaining the format. Each article starts with a title, then the author's name. This is followed by a credit line, listing the group responsible for the article and, in the case of reprints, a notice that it is a reprint and the date it originally appeared. Each article ends with a black rectangle to let you know that that article has ended--so you won't be searching for a continuance when there isn't one. Special graphics are used when necessary and/or

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NORUG Library Update

By Cairy B. Spiers

N.O.R.U.G. - The following is a brief rundown on the current operations of the club's various libraries.

Book Library - Librarian Tony Friedman

At the present time this library consists of about 25 books on various related subjects. These books can be checked out of the library by any member in good standing at any meeting. See Tony before or after the meeting, a signature is required. Most of the books in the library are on loan by past and present members, so please take care of these book while out in your charge. If you have any books which you would like to loan or donate to the library, please feel free to do so. A list of the book library can be obtained from Tony.

16-bit Library - Librarian Steve Matlock

At the time of this writing the 16-bit Public Domain Library consists of 16 disks, a total of 247 files. Included in these are accessories, fonts, clocks, ramdisk handlers and many other utilities and games. At the present time no procedures have been made to check out these disks. If you are a member in good standing and would like a disk, see Steve and he will help you with your selections. There is a charge of \$1.50 and a blank disk for each disk made. This library is only beginning, each week new files are being added by Steve. If you have any new public domain files you would like to donate to the library, see Steve.

8-bit Library - Librarian Cairy Spiers

This library contains in excess of 100 double-sided disks. These include games, utilities, demos, graphics, business applications, education, and sound programs. To obtain a disk you must be a member in good standing. See Cairy and he will assist you. There is a \$1.50 charge for each disk made. Some of these disks are loan copies and can be checked out. If you check out a disk you will be required to leave a \$5.00 deposit. A list will be furnished to any one who requests one.

New Feature

For those in a hurry and would like their book or disk a little faster, call the NORUG BBS at 738-3600. Leave E-Mail to Librarian, who will insure that your book or disk is at the next meeting. Please order a couple of days in advance to allow the librarian time to get it ready. For those who don't own or use a modem call Cairy at 942-3248 between the hours of 11:00AM and 7:00PM Tuesday thru Saturday. He will be happy to leave E-Mail on your behalf.

Librarian's Plea

Please don't make a copy of any disk you acquire from the library for another member or your friends. Every \$1.50 we get will help increase the content of our libraries. Get your friend to join NORUG and let him get his own copies.

If you have any suggestions on how to make our libraries better for you, contact Cairy. ■

Dear Computer Husband

By N.J. Parsons

Diablo Talley (PG News) (Reprint)

To My Darling Husband:

I am sending you this letter in a bogus software company envelope so that you will be sure to read it. Please forgive the deception, but I thought you should know what has been going on at home since your computer entered our lives two years ago.

The children are doing well. Tommy is seven now and is a bright, handsome boy. He has developed quite an interest in the arts. He drew a family portrait for a school project. All the figures were good, but yours was excellent! The chair and the back of your head are very realistic. You would be very proud of him.

Little Jennifer turned three in July. She looks a lot like you did at that age. She is an attractive child and quite smart. She still remembers that you spent the whole afternoon with us on her birthday. What a grand day for Jen, despite the fact that it was stormy and the electricity was out.

I am also doing well. I went blonde about a year ago, and was delighted to discover that it really is more fun! Lars-I mean Mr. Swenson, the department head-has taken an interest in my career and has become a good friend to us all. I have discovered that household chores are much easier since I realized that you didn't mind being vacuumed but that feather dusting made you sneeze.

The house is in good shape. I had the living room painted last spring. I'm not sure you noticed it. I made sure the painters cut air holes in the drop cloth so that you wouldn't be disturbed.

Well, my dear, I must be going. Uncle Lars-I mean Mr. Swenson, is taking us all on a ski trip and there is packing to do. I have hired a housekeeper to take care of things while we are away. She'll keep things in order, fill your coffee cup, and bring your meals to your desk, just the way you like it. I hope you and the computer have a lovely time while we are gone. Tommy, Jen, and I will think of you often--try to remember us while your disks are booting.

Love,

Mary

(Editor's Note: My wife insisted I reprint this article. I don't know why...)



DRAGON'S LAIR Video Disk Control Comes to the ST!

By Mark Penne!

LACC 7/87 (Reprint) - A little over a week ago, a friend told me that the Dragon's Lair game for the Atari ST was finally released by Michtron. Needless to say, I called Michtron and ordered it the very next day. I don't know how many of you have seen or played the LaserDisc arcade game of Dragon's Lair, but the game uses the LaserDisc to show animation while being controlled by a computer.

About a week later I received my package from Michtron. For only \$99 I received the actual Dragon's Lair disc (from the arcade machines), the RS232 cable interface, and the Journey to the Lair software package for the ST to control my LaserDisc player. That is quite a deal when you consider everything you get.

Setting it all up is quite easy. To hook it up you MUST at the present have a LaserDisc player that has an 8-pin DIN computer interface port on the back. I own both the Magnavox UC-8040, and the very old Pioneer VP-1000. The VP-1000 is so old that it doesn't have the computer port, but the Magnavox does. This might not be this way forever though. There is a slot on the drop down menu for the VP-1000, but is currently not implemented.

The interface plugs into the Modem port on the back of the ST, and also into the MIDI out. That's all there is to it, besides plugging the other end into the LaserDisc Player.

From there you insert the LaserDisc in your player and press play, and boot the Journey to the Lair game on your ST. The best set up I've found is to set a color composite monitor or television next to the computer to watch the action while selecting the action you want "Dirk the Daring" to take on your Atari color or monochrome monitor. This is where Michtron's home version differs from the arcade. Michtron doesn't use a joystick to select what you want Dirk to do. It is all mouse controlled by clicking on GEM options on the ST. The action on the LaserDisc stops at every decision point and waits for you to "tell" Dirk what to do. I've heard some complaints about this from people who expected "hack'n slash" joystick control, but frankly, I feel that this opens up a new dimension to the game. With more options than four different joystick directions and a button the game becomes much more like an adventure game with many options and great animation and sound!

There is also an option to use one monitor (not your computer monitor though) if you have an RF modulator. You simply run the RF from the ST through the LaserDisc player and the ST controls showing the video from disc, and switching to ST GEM window. A nice feature, especially if you want the game totally in front of you without two monitors.

I've explained about setting it up, and how Michtron implemented it from the arcade, but how do I feel about the product? I love it! We've been trying to build a LaserDisc controller for several years now, and Michtron comes along and releases an entire ready to run set-up for under \$100! The game gets to be MUCH tougher than the arcade, which I found to be an added feature, since I could win at the arcade. I would like to see a joystick

option, but like I said, the GEM options open the game up a lot more.

This Journey to the Lair was done with some program called VIVA, according to Michtron, I REALLY want to be able to buy VIVA! I want Michtron to hurry up and release it. I have several LaserDiscs that would be ideal for computer interfacing. Mystery Discs I and II, as well as the Space Archive series would be great discs to control. Can you imagine a type of adventure similar to Dragon's Lair, only set exploring the solar system with actual photos of Mars, Saturn and Neptune? I also have the actual arcade discs from Space Ace, and Cliff Hanger that could easily be done also with the help of VIVA!

Overall, I highly recommend Journey to the Lair. LaserDiscs are really the direction to go in computer graphics. If you liked Dragon's Lair, Journey is definitely worth the money. If you don't have a VIDEO LaserDisc player, "GET ONE!" They're cheaper than video tape (discs are usually \$30-35), never wear out, and offer better picture and sound than video tape (i.e. digital audio). Plus, the new players play CDs AND LaserDiscs! Sure, you can't record. Save that for your VCR. But if you enjoy computers you're sure to enjoy the many hours that random access gives you by finding that special part of a show with the press of a button. That's something that a linear format like tape will never be able to match...■

Porting 8 to 16

By Don Zeiders

Space Probes 6/87 (Reprint) - The following information is how to port from the Atari 400, 800, XL and XE computers to the 520 and 1040ST or vice-versa. The information was obtained from the ST Writer manual and Antic, January 1986. You will require an 850 interface, cable and X-Modem telecommunication programs for both computers.

You may ask, why would you even want to do this? I have two reasons that prompted me to do this. The first was that I have always been partial to AtariWriter because it was a simple and good word processor. And to use it, I didn't always have to study the manual before using it on each occasion. For the same reason, I like ST Writer (it's also "free" and 80 columns are great!). This setup lets me transfer some of my former AtariWriter form letters and documents to ST Writer files. The second reason is that I obtained Antic Magazine disks and they also put their compiled ST programs on the 5 1/4 disks, thus I needed a way to transfer them directly to the ST.

The process to port the programs is simple and also fun. The first step was to obtain a cable, it is not available over the counter at this time. All that is needed is at least a five wire cable, a female 25-pin connector for the ST and a 9-pin connector for the 850 interface. I could not find the connectors locally so I took the easy way out and called Bob Hinkelmaier at Flight Systems to make the cable for me, the cost was only \$8.00. The pin connections are as follows:

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PHONE MAIL

**Set up 858
EXPRESS!
to auto-
answer and
autosave
incoming
data!**

By Bob Pasold

S.N.A.G.E. 5/87 (Reprint) - More and more people are buying personal computers and a fair percentage of them are purchasing modems. Electronic Mail is not just a thing of the future or just for the wealthy. You can set up your own "electronic mailbox" and receive mail while away from home or sleeping! Let me explain...

I live in Florida and the rest of my family is scattered across the Eastern United States. Many of my family members own personal computers and modems so we send text files to each other instead of letters...and the best news is that it is often less expensive than the mail service. I have been communicating with my family for about two years in this fashion and find it highly reliable and rewarding. Plus it is immediate! When I get up in the morning, the first thing I do is turn on the monitor to see if any E-mail has come in. If so, I immediately save it to floppy, even before I read it so nothing can happen to it.

At first, we were using MPP 1000's because their software supported unattended downloading. But soon I grew tired of 300 baud and purchased the Supra 1200AT which also supports unattended downloading. That software however did not support the 512k ramdisk on my XE, so I began to look for other software for this purpose.

In my opinion, Keith Ledbetter's EXPRESS! is by far the best telecommunications program available. I began to wonder if this fabulous program could possibly be set up to autosave to buffer or to disk unattended. Nowhere in the 858 EXPRESS! docs was there any mention of this so you can imagine my excitement and happiness to discover that 858 EXPRESS! could indeed download and save while no one was around! And...Wow, is it easy to do! Here is how:

Boot up your 858 EXPRESS! modem program (I use version 3.0, I don't know if earlier versions will support this) and turn on your modem. From the Main Menu hit ESCAPE (which forces the program to think you're online) and then press OPTION (which saves anything that comes in to the buffer). Set up this way, as soon as a call comes in, the modem will autoanswer and save to buffer any incoming text. To check to see if any file has come in, simply turn on your monitor (I also hit the SPACE BAR at this point to prompt the computer out of attract mode...ie...changing colors, etc.). If text is on the screen, hit START to go to the Main Menu and save the buffer to floppy. This will clear the buffer so now just view that file from the floppy or read your mail from a word processor.

This has been tested on the Supra 1200AT, Avatex 1200 and Avatex 1200HC and should work the same on most Hayes-compatible modems. To

test your modem to see if it will indeed work in this fashion, turn your computer and modem off, turn your disk drive off and your computer back on so only the READY prompt of BASIC is showing. Turn your modem back on as if you were going to use it. Now have someone call your number. (If you live in Pinellas County and have GTE telephone service you can dial your own number, wait for the recording saying that you've dialed your own party line and hang up.) If your modem answers the phone without having a program to tell it to do so, then it will work perfectly as described. If, however, your phone rings and your modem does not respond, you may have to command it to auto answer in this way: from the Main 858 EXPRESS! menu, choose ASCII (not ATASCII) translation. Now hit ESCAPE and with your modem turned on and ready to receive data, type ATAA. Then hit RETURN. (This, in all Hayes-compatible modems, commands the modem to autoanswer.) Now, hit OPTION to save any incoming info to buffer and you're all set. Remember, in this configuration you are saving to buffer so the size of your buffer depends on the DOS you are using. Here are my experiences: Atari DOS 2.0, 2.5 gives you 3328 bytes; SpartaDOS 3.2 gives you a buffer of 4608 bytes; SpartaDOS 2.3 gives the largest buffer of 8064 bytes, big enough for most all your letter capturing needs. For those of you who expect great volumes of incoming text, you'll want to save direct to ramdisk or floppy disk. In order to do this, you must fool the program into thinking it is on line while you set this up. Here is how you do this: Most Hayes-compatible modems have dip switches. On the Avatex and Supra modems you would push switch #7 down. This is the CD (forced carrier detected) switch. On the above mentioned modems, the down position is the ON position. With the CD switch activated, the EXPRESS! program thinks it is online. It seems to do no harm to leave this switch on while waiting for a file to come in. Just be sure you return the switch to the OFF position before making your next call or you'll get a false "connected" indication. Keep in mind that this switch need not be turned on when auto saving to buffer. So, to auto save to disk, turn on your CD dip switch, hit ESCAPE from the Main Menu to force terminal mode, hit START to re-enter Main Menu, type T to capture to disk. You'll be asked to give it a file name and as soon as you do and hit RETURN, you'll be all set to save to disk. Do not hit OPTION to auto save to disk, auto save is already turned on by choosing the T function. Plus, you can always tell if auto save is on just be looking at the border color of your screen.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

1) Whenever you are sending directly to another computer, you MUST use HALF DUPLEX. Use Full Duplex only when communicating with a BBS. If you are setting up to auto receive, it is preferable to be in Half Duplex but it is ABSOLUTELY necessary for the sending modem to be in Half Duplex.

2) It is probably best to use the standard ASCII translation unless you know for sure that only Atari computers will be sending you files. In that case use ATASCII. No harm will come however if someone sends a text file to you in ASCII and you are receiving in ATASCII, as long as it is just text. You could not send inverse characters and control characters unless both sending and receiving

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NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE

By D. Holzhauser

N.O.A.U.G. - NOAUG has many interesting and informative newsletters from other Atari groups which may be checked out by our members. In an effort to better inform NOAUG members, I am going to print a monthly listing. This listing will contain the users' group name, month of issue, and the articles contained in that issue (with a brief explanation when possible). Since we exchange with so many groups, I will put some in each month.

We exchange with these groups so that you may be better informed as to what is going on elsewhere. So, don't miss out on a great benefit of your membership. Newsletters may be checked by any club member and are to be returned at the next meeting. Newsletters are made available to members after the officers needing them are finished with them. This time period is no more than 30 days. If interested in any of the following newsletters, please see me.

POKEY PRESS 7/87

1050 Duplicator--what it does, how and how well; Trip Hawkins Speaks On Compuserve; Another Game Machine--Atari's announcement of the 65 XE game machine; Atari Online! Questions And Answers Part 2; Superman--review; Phantasie--review; ST Notes; The Laughing I/O Port--Is The 8 Bit Dead? (a humorous article)

SLCC 6/87

Turbo Basic Public Domain Speedster--reprint from A-Bug; Life Liberty, And The Pursuit Of Happiness--things to do with your Atari; Random Ramblings--Mostly about Publishing Partner

REACH 7/87

Ways And Holes Of 8-Bit Word Processing--about AtariWriter; Express--8-bit telecommunication power; Fast--a desk accessory

SLCC 7/87

Introduction To Spreadsheets; 8-Bit Telecommunications--Oasis: How To Fall Down An Elevator Shaft--16-bit review of Space Quest; PIO Controller; Expo Report; Educational News; Turbo Basic Returns

MACE 8/87

News, Views And Reviews; Bit vs ST--What's All The Fuss; Telenet Letter, News From Other Groups, Flying The ST--commentary on ST World; New 8-Bit Products, New ST Products; A Modest Proposal For Improving MACE Meetings; Summer CES; A Wife's Letter; MACE PS Label Disk--review

POKEY 6/87

Great Lakes Atari Expo; Upgrade Or Go Another Way; ST Or Bust; The 8-Bit Arc programs; What Happened To BBS'S; Doing P/M Graphics In Basic XE; The Atari 800XL 256K Upgrade; Fore!--Golf Comparison For The ST; Do We Really Need 2?--split up of club into two groups; Alternate Reality--ST version; ZMag April Issue 46; Gem For 8 Bits; New IBM Release: 1050 Disk Drive Fix; Product Reviews

IMAGE 7/87

Newell Upgrade Fixes; Safety Tip; The Atari Challenge; ST XPress Newswire; Interview With Tom Harker (hard disk users group); ZMag Capsule Reviews--of Black Cauldron (ST), Hacker (ST/XE/XL), Spellbreaker (ST/XE/XL); Guest Commentary--about hackers; Antic CES Report; ZMag Atari Report; The Atari PC: The First IBM PC-Compatible With Built In EGA; ZMag Software Reviews; FCC Proposal; IBM Emulator Update; Hardware Updates (disk drives); ZMag Newswire--Compuserve Blasts FCC Proposal

PAC July/August '87

The Mad Reviewer Has Struck Back; Run AtariWriter Plus With SpartaDOS; Easy Draw--review ST; Microflyte Joystick--review; Burn In; ICD MultiI/O Board Specifications; Servicing XL/XE Power Supply; Wife's Letter

Minot ACUG

Computer Eyes--a review; Cardiac Arrest--8-bit and ST review; Wizard Crown--review; Silent Butler (review)

CLAUG 6/87

Keyboard Definer--program and description; Interfacing A TTL-RGB Monitor To The 520ST; Soft Touch--touch tablet tutorial; The Consumer Electronics Show

CLAUG 7/87

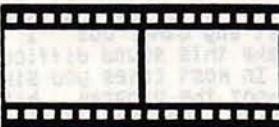
Just What Is A Centronics Interface?; Yet Another RGB Monitor Interface For 520/1040ST; How To Write Newsletter Articles; Security By Half-truth; 128 Colors On Screen

CAUG 7/87

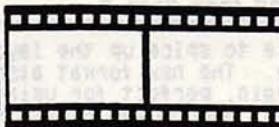
CES Review--reprint of Current Notes Art.; Planetarium Fix

ONLY ST 7/87

CAD-3D Review; ST-Transformer Approved; DBMan/Zoomracks Reviews; Atari News; ST Wars--review; Mathematical Induction And Programming; Midi Dept.; Karate Kid II; SSI/TSR Agreement



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SEC'S NEWS



By Denise Holzhauser

N.O.A.U.G. - Well, here we are at the end of the summer and it sure went by quick. Time sure flies when you're having fun! Things seem to be looking up for the 8-bit Atari's. The CES show concentrated on reestablishing the 8-bit Market. It seems that Atari is coming out with a new drive which will be double-sided double-density with a new DOS that will read all densities. Of course they are still planning on releasing the SX212 Modem, the 80-column card, AtariWriter 80 (80 columns), and of course the 65XE game machine. Atari is supposed to release an SIO cable and Keith Ledbetter's SX Express! shortly after it releases the Modem. Included with this package will be the new handler file. If you have an 850 interface the Modem can be used with existing programs setup for Hayes-compatible modems.

The Mega ST's are supposed to be released shortly along with the blitter chip. Rumor has it that the blitter will be in the Mega ST's. I guess we will have to wait and see.

The August 4 meeting of NOAUG was well attended. After the reading of the minutes, officers and committee reports, and the other business on the agenda, Steve Matlock demoed Flight Simulator from SubLogic for the ST. Steve did a good job on the demo. I liked the part when he was trying to go between the twin towers and crashed into the building! Remind

me never to let him be my pilot! Upon completion of his demo the club broke up into Sigs.

The club's newsletter exchange is growing each month. This month we added a few new ones. Newsletters from other clubs are informative and occasionally humorous. So remember NOAUG Members if you want to check one out see me before or after the meeting.

The NOAUG raffle of the Hayes Modem will be held the first meeting in September. Don't forget to turn in your money and ticket stubs to me. If you are unable to sell your tickets then give them back to me before the raffle.

The agenda for our September meetings is as follows: Livaudais Video will be for business, an ST demo, and then we shall go into Sigs. The meeting at the school will be demo oriented.

NOAUG's meeting dates for the next few months are as follows:

Livaudais	School
Sept. 1	Sept. 15
Oct. 6	Oct. 20
Nov. 3	Nov. 17

Well, that is about it for this month. Until next time--Happy Computing! ■

ET TU, OSS

According to an OSS spokesman the two Action! BareWare products (GUL & SEA) announced in our last issue "will not make it to market."

REMarks

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available to spice up the layouts of the pages a little. The new format also leaves a large left margin, perfect for using a 3-hole punch on so that your NORUG newsletters can be saved in a 3-ring binder.

If you would like to see one of your own articles in the format above just get it to me at one of the meetings or via the club BBS. Just about any format will do (but AtariWriter Plus files are preferred).

* * * * *

A special note of congratulations here to Treasurer Roy D'Arcangelo for his outstanding work in bringing our club's finances and membership records up to date and into order. It took Roy many hours to determine our active membership from a lengthy list of past and present members.

Last month I issued an '87-'88 "Challenge" to our new officers to breathe new life into their positions. Before that issue was even released to the membership Roy had answered my challenge with some fine work. Congratulations, Roy--and on behalf of the NORUG membership, thank you!

Oh yeah...keep up the good work. We wouldn't want you to stop now! ■

Porting 8 to 16

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PIN CONNECTIONS

25 pin ST connector	- 9-pin 850 connector
2 (transmitted data)	- 4 (receive data)
3 (receive data)	- 3 (send data)
4 (request to send)	- 8 (clear to send in)
7 (signal ground)	- 5 (signal ground)
8 (data carrier detect)	- 7 (request to send out)

Once the cable is made, simply connect the 25 pin connector to the Modem port of the ST and the 9-pin connector to the serial port 1 of the 850 interface. Then boot both computers with an X-Modem capable telecommunication program and you are ready to transfer files. Antic states that any A-Modem only program like Hometerm will not work because it translates all carriage returns into ATASCII value 155. I will not go into how to use the Modem programs because they are all different, just be sure to use the same baud rate on both programs. I used ST-Talk and AMODEM60 from Compute! Magazine. This can be obtained from the club's library. I hope this information will be of some value and wish you happy computing. ■

Phone Mail

continued from Page 5

terminals were in ATASCII.

3) If you don't have a copy of 850 EXPRESS! version 3.0, ask your SysOp to post it for you. If he doesn't have it, contact me and I'll get it to you.

4) I only know for sure that this method of auto saving works with 850 EXPRESS! version 3.0. I know it does NOT work with MPP EXPRESS! version 1.0. I haven't tried it with 1030 EXPRESS! although I feel it probably would not work since the 1030 does

not come with a ring detector.

5) I truly recommend SpartaDOS 2.3 because of the large buffer it gives and it will read and write to most any other DOS. I sincerely hope I didn't make this sound difficult to set up...it's not. In most cases you simply turn on your Modem, boot the program, hit ESCAPE, and then hit OPTION. And that's all!

If you have any questions, comments, or just want to try it out, you can call my autosaving 850 EXPRESS! at 813-393-0173, between the hours of 1:00AM and 6:30AM, 300 baud Half Duplex ATASCII (ASCII will work if you don't have ATASCII). I auto receive at 300 baud because not all my family members have 1200 baud yet...but I have a feeling that it won't be long! Remember also that when you call another Modem set up to auto save, you receive no prompts when the Modem answers the phone. As soon as the connection is made, you are "live" with the other computer. You may then type your message or send a pre-typed file from disk. DO NOT SEND XMODEM to me since I do not set up my program to receive that way. I sincerely hope you receive some enjoyment out of this information.

Editor's Note: I have credited this article to the Indiana-Michigan Atari Group Exchange, the source from which this reprint was taken. The author, however, states that he lives in Florida and I suspect this article originally appeared in a newsletter there. If the editor of the newsletter in which this article first appeared will contact me through the NORUG, proper credit will be noted at a later date. ■

48K LIMIT

By Jerry Telfer

SLCC Journal 5/87 (Reprint) - Black is white. Up is down. Left is right. And in the area of commercially released new software for the 8-bit Atari, more is demonstrably less.

Once firm believers in the concept of upward compatibility, software publishers who formerly lobbied Atari for more programming space (read RAM) now appear to have forsaken that ideal; either not releasing or not porting their wares--even proven sales hits--to any 8-bit wearing a Fuji logo. The reason for this seems to be the coupling of lowest-common-denominator biz school marketing theory with the reluctance of the folks who crunch the code to do lowest common denominator programming.

SLCC got a hint of this theory at work a couple of months ago when Jeff Johanningman and John Manley of Electronic Arts were our guests at the monthly main meeting. They showed EA's latest hot games: **SkyFox**, **Arctic Fox**, and **HMS Pegasus** for the ST; and **Mail Order Monsters** and **Lords of CONQUEST** for the 8-bits. Asked by 8-bit users impressed with the ST offerings when they might see them translated for the Atari (as they already have been for "other" 8-bit computers), our guests explained that one-half the Atari 8-bits "out there" are 48K Atari 800s. They went on to explain that EA is unwilling to release any title that won't run well on ALL Ataris, and these games really NEED 64K to run in. The programmers and the marketing folks agreed that the games were not sufficiently enticing with 25% of the programs excised to fit the 48K limit, so there is no plan to release them to the Atari 8-bit market.

(continued on next page)

EA isn't alone in imposing the 48K limit on "releasable/saleable" 8-bit Atari software. The Wizards at Microprose have been bombarding Atarians with teasers and four-color ads for Gunship for over a year now, but are reported to be bringing their hands about releasing it in a 48K package for the Atari eight. Starglider, written for the ST, is now available for the C-64 but not for the Atari. The list of "Apple II/C-64 Only" software for the 8-bit Market goes on and on.... Now, I don't want to slight the happy owners of those venerable Atari 800s, either. But I've got a PUMPED UP 130XE (320K software-legal upgrade), and I'm getting pretty hot about the software publishers' attitude. Not all Ataris are created equal. Not only that, but--and this may come as a heckuva shock to the publishers--some of the Ataris that WERE created equal didn't STAY that way! Axlon RAMdisks, Mosaic Memory expansion boards, and now the 1-Meg memory boards from Magna Systems and the 1-Meg cartridges from Canoe Computer Systems have seen to that.

One of the big drawing cards for the Atari 800 was its accessibility; easy to repair, easy to modify, and rather thorough docs available about its innards. Heaven for the hardware hacker.... With the arrival of ICD's MIO boxes with brains up to one Meg for the XL/XE lines (Canoe's cartridges also work for the X series machines) there would seem to be no particular reason why the "standard MAXIMUM" programming space should be 48K-64K is easily achievable for those older machines as an upgrade, and with up to a Meg affordably available on the X machines, there is room in the market for "Elite" power software. If one checks into the price of a 65XE ~~versus~~ ~~versus~~ the cost of a RAM upgrade or the MINIMUM charge at any repair facility just to give an 800 a tuneup, it's pretty clear that owners of classic 800s have a number of options open to them. Original Atari 400s have been upgraded to access the newer software, and the 800 owners should either follow suit or make some space in the closet next to their faded Nehru jackets. Upgrade or make funeral arrangements.... However, until the software publishers either change their act or are successful in killing off the Atari 8-bit Market, there is no particular pressure on the 48K owners to modernize.

Of course, there is also no particular reason for me as an XE owner to pay full price for 3/4 of a program either. If Microprose ever releases Gunship I'll buy it--IF IT IS THE FULL GAME. Otherwise, I'll watch the dust accumulate on the shrinkwrap. I won't pay full price for an inferior program for a great computer--especially when I see the same program running great on an inferior computer! One must have SOME dignity.

The publishers have a number of options open to them, too. The "flippy" is not exactly a new concept, though it's usually implemented as a multi-breed release. No harm in releasing two sides for the different vintages of Atari. The Atari XE/800 flippy release of PaperClip isn't what drained batteries included. Also, segmented loading of programs based on testing for RAM size is a proven possibility. SubLOGIC's Flight Simulator II will run in either 48K or 64K. With 64K the flier gets eight useful additions to the simulator not able to squeeze into the 48K version. Since checking for extra RAM is a trivial exercise in programming, I would like to see existing programs enhanced for the 800XLs and 130XEs.

Just imagine F-15 Strike Eagle with

terrain features. Think of Print Shop with a save-to-disk option for ALL your creations. Think of Silent Service without disk access timeouts. Think of The Music Studio with MIDI compatibility and good-quality hardcopy--just like the C-64 version. Think of Leader Board with sandtraps--just like on the Apples. Nuts, as long as we're dreaming, think of what the whiz kids at Lucasfilm could do with their fractal terrain algorithms (a la Rescue on Fractalus), GTIA graphics, and the A-10 Thunderbolt.... In fact, think of all your favorite applications and game software. Think of the many features that an additional 16K or 80K (XL and XE, respectively) would make possible.

Do a little research. Go to the software store and look at the titles available for those OTHER computers. (I mean, Abacus is now releasing some stuff for the Atari. Why not the 64K baby CAD in Atari format?) Then, most importantly, boot up your favorite word processor and WRITE TO THE SOFTWARE PUBLISHER(S) OF YOUR CHOICE with your desires for enhanced software and your willingness to purchase upgrades. (Also, when you buy a piece of software (particularly if it's a two brand floppy) SEND IN THE DUMB REGISTRATION CARD! LET THEM KNOW WHAT MACHINE THE SOFTWARE IS CALLING HOME! Surely 22 cents in postage isn't too great a price to invest in the future of your machine.

NOTE TO SOFTWARE PUBLISHERS

Yes, you've got some raw numbers that tell you that half the cup is empty. Well, half the cup is FULL! And in fact, more than half the cup may be full, since the numbers you're using don't begin to count how many of us have more than one 8-bit computer. There is no reason why this should not be a time for the recapture and growth of the Atari 8-bit Market. The Marketing Madness of the Warner Atari is over, and the new machines offer all the programming potential you belabored the "old" Atari for in vain.

Many of us have neither the resources or desire to move to the ST, with all its many charms. And particularly, we won't plunk down our loot just to have access to the new games. We still exist as a market, BUT YOU HAVE TO OFFER US QUALITY GOODS IF YOU WANT OUR BUSINESS. WE WON'T PAY A PREMIUM FOR AMPUTATED SOFTWARE!

We are a staunch market. We survived the suicide attempts of the Warner Atari. We are hanging in there today against the well-deserved popularity of the new (ST) baby in the family. Pretty, but it eats too much. Please stop attempting to murder us. ■

CLASSIFIED ADS!

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Contact Karl Belson at 393-2950 or leave him E-mail on the NOUG BBS.

SEPTEMBER

1987

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

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